DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 393 479 JC 960 148

TITLE	Challenges to LRS Materials.
INSTITUTION	Austin Community Coll., Tex.
PUB DATE	14 Dec 95
NOTE	12p.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Community Colleges; *Grievance Procedures; Guidelines; *Learning Resources Centers; *Library Collections; Library Materials; *Library Material Selection; *Library Policy; Library Standards; Two Year Colleges; Users (Information); *User Satisfaction (Information)
IDENTIFIERS	*Austin Community College TX

ABSTRACT

The Learning Resource Services (LRS) department at Austin Community College, in Texas, has developed a procedure for dealing with situations when a library user objects to items in a collection or display or protests that an item is not in the collection. First, three resources have been created to handle challenges. The LRS Materials Selection Policy outlines criteria for collection development; a Challenge Procedures manual provides a step-by-step guide to handling challenges; and a Materials Challenge Packet provides checklists and further resources, including the Library Bill of Rights (LBR). Specific guidelines and recommendations for responding to challenges include the following: (1) during initial contact, the LRS staff should refer the library user to the appropriate supervisor; (2) a materials review committee will be formed upon request to reconsider the LRS materials; (3) if the library user is not satisfied with the decision of the committee, he or she may appeal to the associate vice president of the LRS for a review; and (4) the LRS will not review the same title or work more than once every 5 years, unless it has been substantially altered. The Materials Challenge Packet is appended, including a summary of the LRS Materials Selection Policy, the LBR, a Materials Challenge Checklist, and forms for requesting reconsideration of LRS materials and appealing. (TGI)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 393 479

Challenges to LRS Materials

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

T. Iglehart

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC).

Austin Community College
Austin, Texas
December 14, 1995

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

JC 960 148

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

CHALLENGES TO LRS MATERIALS

Imagine . . .

You are working at the circulation desk and a person comes up to you, expressing dismay that Learning Resource Services has a copy of **The Joy of Sex** in its collection. He insists that the work be removed from the stacks because of its pornographic nature.

What would you do?

Or, you are working the reference desk and a LRS user approaches, appearing quite upset. She complains that Learning Resource Services has a copy of a work which she deems to be racist and sexist. "I demand that you remove this work from the shelves at once!" she exclaims.

Learning Resource Services (LRS) at Austin Community College has developed a procedure for situations when

1. an individual objects to an item in the collection, on display, or
2. an individual protests that an item is not in the collection.

It is hoped that providing a straightforward sequence of events will help all parties ensure due process and contribute to the efficient administration of the LRS.

The three documents discussed below are important to consider when materials are challenged:

1. The LRS Materials Selection Policy is the basis for selection decisions. It states what we collect and why. It can be used by LRS Managers to demonstrate materials selection criteria to the LRS user making a challenge.

2. The *Challenge Procedures* provide a step-by-step framework for handling a challenge to collection materials.

3. The *Materials Challenge Packet* provides the LRS user and LRS staff with:

- a brief overview of challenge procedures to answer the LRS user's questions;
- two copies of the *Materials Challenge Checklist*: one copy is completed by the LRS staff on duty at the time the LRS user first voices a concern, while the second copy is given to the LRS user at the same time;
- a summary of the *LRS Materials Selection Policy;*
- a copy of the *Library Bill of Rights*;
- *Request for Reconsideration of LRS Materials* form to be completed by the LRS user to initiate the review procedure.

CHALLENGE PROCEDURES

Transactions which involve challenges should be no different from other interactions with LRS users. Throughout the procedure, representatives of the LRS will display courtesy toward the LRS user. Angry exchanges between the LRS staff and the LRS user will only be counterproductive. Assume that library users are sincere in their concerns. Remain calm—ensure due process. Listen carefully, respectfully, and courteously. Do not argue, agree, or disagree with the person. Build an image of receptivity, openness, fairness, and friendliness to enhance the standing of libraries and the concept of intellectual freedom.

Challenges may take several forms. People may object to print materials, audiovisuals, computer software, and the electronic resources in our collection. They may protest when an item is not in the collection. They may also object to artwork, photographs, and other materials displayed in LRS areas. This information addresses all these scenarios.

Note: For objections to information available through the ACC Internet server, please refer LRS users to to the ACC Internet Administrator. People are expected to use Internet and WWW sources in accordance with ACC policy.

I. Initial contact

When someone objects to materials in the LRC or protests when an item is not in the collection, LRS staff should refer that person to the Head Librarian (for print and electronic reference sources), or to the Instructional Technology Manager (for audiovisuals, computer software, and art exhibits). They will:

- Discuss the person's concerns
- Explain the LRS selection and review process
- Provide the person with the Materials Challenge Packet

If the appropriate professional staff members are not available, LRS staff will:

- Forward the person's name and number to the manager
- Give the person the manager's name and number
- Give the person the Materials Challenge Packet

The LRS user should:

- Discuss concerns with the assisting staff member
- Read the Packet carefully
- Complete the Request for Reconsideration of LRS Materials if a Materials Review is desired

II. Materials Review Committee

A Request for Reconsideration of LRS Materials will initiate the Materials Review.

A Materials Review Committee (MRC) will be formed. An LRS librarian or Instructional Technology/ Development professional will be appointed by the Associate Vice President of Learning Resource Services to chair the committee.

The organization of the committee shall consist of at least one other LRS staff member or members (drawn from different campuses of ACC), and from one to three faculty members. Some of these faculty members (including department head and division chair levels, and/or a member of a Faculty Senate committee) should be from disciplines similar in subject matter to the challenged item.

Prior to the first MRC meeting, all members should receive copies of and read:

- The LRS Materials Selection Policy
- This procedure
- The Library Bill of Rights

The MRC meetings will be closed to the public. Minutes of the meetings may be requested through the Open Records Act.

The MRC chair will:

- Distribute materials to all members
- Preside at meetings
- Provide members with an overview of the process

The MRC will:

- Keep minutes and other documentation.
- Read, view, or listen to the challenged material in its entirety.
- Review the selection process and the criteria for selection.
- Check reviews and bibliographies to ascertain whether or not the work has sufficient merit to warrant its retention or purchase.
- Determine if the work exists in the collections of institutions comparable in size, student body, and educational mission; for example, other urban community colleges or urban colleges with a diverse student population.
- Invite the LRS user to speak to them, if it is deemed necessary.
- Consider the objections in light of the LRS Materials Selection Policy and the principles of the Library Bill of Rights.
- Make a decision that the work be retained, removed, or restricted. If consensus cannot be reached, a simple majority vote will prevail.

The MRC should:

- Decide to retain or purchase the material if it meets the selection criteria and remains suitable for the collection,
- Decide to withdraw or not purchase an item if the material is unsuitable; if, for example, it does not meet the ACC selection criteria.
- As an alternative, decide to label or restrict access to the work.

After making a decision, the chair of the MRC will draft a memorandum, to be signed by all members of the committee, explaining the committee's decision to the library user.

Whatever the decision of the MRC, the principles of the Library Bill of Rights should be reiterated in the memorandum to the library user, and an explanation given of how the decision is in accordance with those principles.

If the outcome of the MRC decision is not what the LRS user requested, the Appeal form will be sent to the library user as well.

III. Appeal to Associate Vice President

If the library user is not satisfied with the decision of the MRC, he or she may appeal to the Associate Vice President of Learning Resource Services for a review.

The Associate Vice President will then review the library user's objection and the work of the MRC. After a thorough evaluation, the Associate Vice President will make the final decision as to whether the work will be retained, purchased, removed, or restricted.

The Associate Vice President will be free to make a decision independent of the MRC and will not be bound by the decision of that committee.

The Associate Vice President will notify the library user of the decision in writing. This decision will be final and not subject to appeal.

IV. Restrictions

Learning Resource Services will not review the same title or work more than once every five years, unless it has been substantially altered.

Procedures

If you question the appropriateness of collection material, make a thorough study of the Materials Challenge Packet before deciding whether or not to pursue a challenge to materials. After a careful review of this packet, if you still think that the item in question should be removed or purchased, please complete the Request for Reconsideration of LRS Materials form, found on the last page of this packet, and return it to the Associate Vice President of Learning Resource Services.

When you complete the Request for Reconsideration of LRS Materials, you will be requesting a Materials Challenge Review. An ad hoc committee (called the Materials Review Committee) composed of LRS professionals and other ACC faculty and staff will evaluate the challenged item and decide if the item fits the LRS Materials Selection Policy. The committee will make a decision that the work be purchased, retained, withdrawn, or restricted. The chairperson of the committee will then inform you of that decision in writing.

If you are not satisfied with the decision of the Materials Review Committee, you may request an appeal be made to the Associate Vice President of LRS using the Appeal form. The Associate Vice President will review the item in question (as well as the work of the Materials Review Committee) before making a decision. The Associate Vice President will decide that the work be purchased, retained, withdrawn, or restricted . The Associate Vice President will then notify you in writing of the final decision, which will not be subject to further appeal.

No LRS materials will be removed without the review process. Items in question will remain on the shelf and available to LRS users until a final decision is made.

Materials Included

- The *Materials Challenge Checklist* is to be completed by the LRS staff member on duty when you first voice your objection to a work in the collection. You will receive a duplicate copy of the checklist so that you will be able to see what the staff member is completing.
- The *Materials Selection Policy Summary* is an overview of the collection development policy of LRS. Reading it will help you understand the considerations taken into account when acquiring of items for the collection.
- The *Library Bill of Rights* of the American Library Association (ALA) is included in the packet to bring to your attention the statement on intellectual freedom adopted by the largest and most influential professional organization for librarians in the country. The Library Bill of Rights has been approved by the ACC Board of Trustees and is included in the ACC *Manual of Policy*.

The LRS staff supports the ALA in its concept of intellectual freedom. As a result, the LRS attempts to provide access to differing points of view on controversial matters. Subjects will be considered without prejudice or censorship when determining the balance of the collection as long as they fit into the general selection criteria of LRS.

- The *Request for Reconsideration of LRS Materials*, is to be filled out if you choose to initiate the review procedure.

Summary of LRS Materials Selection Policy
Austin Community College

A. Introduction and Purpose

1. Austin Community College offers freshman and sophomore arts and science courses, occupational programs, avocational and vocational continuing education courses, and adult basic education.
2. Learning Resource Services (LRS) provides the educational resources necessary to support the goals of Austin Community College (ACC). All materials acquired by the LRS should reflect resource needs of Austin Community College.
3. LRS serves a diverse clientele, varied in age, literacy level, ethnic background, and previous exposure to formal education.

B. Availability of Materials

1. LRS provides a relevant, sufficient, and useful multimedia collection for all programs and divisions of the College. Items in the collection should reflect one of the following:
   - curriculum support
   - general information
   - professional growth
   - cultural enrichment
   - extra-curricular interests

C. Responsibility for Materials Selection

1. Ultimate responsibility for selection of materials rests with the Associate Vice President of Learning Resource Services (LRS), who is responsible for final purchase decisions based on the criteria outlined in the *General Criteria for Selection.*
2. Subject selection specialists of the LRS staff are responsible for collection development in terms of coordinating and balancing the collection as a whole. These staff members work closely both with faculty and students in coordinating selection of materials and help to build a collection that reflects the resource needs of the College.
3. Faculty and college staff are encouraged to make materials recommendations in their area of expertise.

D. Materials Considered for Acquisition

1. Subject matter that is curriculum-related is given primary consideration for purposes of acquisition. Examples include items needed for class assignments, supplemental materials, reference materials, and bibliographic tools which facilitate finding and using such materials.
2. After primary needs have been met, consideration will be given to materials which meet special needs or interests of students, faculty, and staff.

E. General Criteria for Selection

1. Printed materials are selected on the basis of:
   - instructional support/importance of subject matter to curriculum
   - critiques appearing in standard selection periodicals and tools
   - faculty review and recommendation
   - accuracy of information
   - non-availability in current collection/ availability of material elsewhere in community
   - demand and potential use
   - significance
   - permanent or timely value
   - cost
   - reputation of publisher
2. Computer software and audiovisual materials are selected on the basis of:
   - technical quality and instructional design
   - availability and compatibility of equipment
   - cost of purchase vs. rental
3. Periodicals are selected to provide current information not readily available in other formats, to supplement the materials collection, to meet curriculum requirements or enhance curriculum offerings, to provide current information, and to provide recreational reading. Selection criteria for periodicals include need, reputation, and price.

4. Popular paperback books are selected primarily as supplemental and/or recreational material.

5. Leisure reading materials are selected through a commercial rental/purchase plan and provide high interest/best seller titles for supplemental and/or recreational reading.

Approved by the ACC Board of Trustees July 7, 1980. Amended March 9, 1987, and September14, 1992.

LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

1. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

2. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

3. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

4. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

5. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

6. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 18, 1948. Amended February 2, 1961, June 27, 1967, and January 23, 1980 by the ALA Council. Approved by the Austin Community College Board of Trustees, February 1, 1993.

MATERIALS CHALLENGE CHECKLIST

This form is to be completed by the LRS manager at the time the LRS user requests reconsideration of LRS materials. It should be removed at that time from the packet and forwarded to the Associate Vice President of Learning Resource Services. LRS personnel should at all times display courtesy toward the person making the request for reconsideration.

1. When someone objects to LRS materials or protests when an item is not in the LRS, staff should refer that person to the Head Librarian (for print materials and electronic reference sources) or to the Instructional Technology Manager (for audiovisual and computer software). Note: Refer questions on Internet Resources to the ACC Internet Manager, not LRS staff.

   ☐ Check when #1 completed

2. The LRS Manager then informs the LRS user that he or she can initiate a procedure to request that material be reviewed.

   ☐ Check when #2 completed

3. The LRS Manager will listen to and discuss the person's concerns, then refer the LRS user to the Materials Challenge Packet (attached).

   A. The LRS Manager will ask the LRS user to read the Materials Challenge Packet thoroughly before deciding whether or not to proceed with the request.

   ☐ Check when #3A completed

   B. The LRS Manager will ask the LRS user to complete the Request for Reconsideration to initiate the review process. This Request will be submitted to the Associate Vice President who will appoint a Materials Review Committee.

   ☐ Check when #3B completed

4. Briefly outline the nature of the user's concern.

   ☐ Check when #4 completed

_____ _____

LRS Manager assisting LRS user | Date

_____ _____

LRS Department | LRS Phone

Forward this copy to the Associate Vice President, Austin Community College Learning Resource Services

MATERIALS CHALLENGE CHECKLIST — USER COPY

This form is to be completed by the LRS manager at the time the LRS user requests reconsideration of LRS materials. It should be removed at that time from the packet and forwarded to the Associate Vice President of Learning Resource Services. LRS personnel should at all times display courtesy toward the person making the request for reconsideration.

1. When someone objects to LRS materials or protests when an item is not in the LRS, staff should refer that person to the Head Librarian (for print materials and electronic reference sources) or to the Instructional Technology Manager (for audiovisual and computer software). Note: Refer questions on Internet Resources to the ACC Internet Manager, not LRS staff.. ☐ Check when #1 completed

2. The LRS Manager then informs the LRS user that he or she can initiate a procedure to request that material be reviewed. ☐ Check when #2 completed

3. The LRS Manager will listen to and discuss the person's concerns, then refer the LRS user to the Materials Challenge Packet (attached).

   A. The LRS Manager will ask the LRS user to read the Materials Challenge Packet thoroughly before deciding whether or not to proceed with the request. ☐ Check when #3A completed

   B. The LRS Manager will ask the LRS user to complete the Request for Reconsideration to initiate the review process. This Request should be submitted to the Associate Vice-President who will appoint a Materials Review Committee. ☐ Check when #3B completed

4. Briefly outline the nature of the user's concern. ☐ Check when #4 completed

LRS Manager assisting LRS user _____ Date _____

LRS Department _____ LRS Phone _____

Give this copy to the LRS user.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LRS MATERIALS

Please complete the following concerning the material in question and return to the Associate Vice President for Learning Resource Services. Use back of form or attach extra sheets if desired.

This is a request to [ ] remove something from the collection

[ ] add something to the collection

1. Title:

2. Author/Producer:

3. Publisher/Distributor:

4. Call Number:

5. Format (book, record, film, tape, etc.):

6. Campus location(s):

7. Are you currently associated with Austin Community College? If so, please describe your affiliation.

8. Do you represent an organization? If so, please identify.

9. Have you read, seen or heard this material in its entirety? If not, which parts did you read or view?

10. Have you read reviews of this item? Where did you find the reviews? Were the reviews favorable or unfavorable?

11. What about this material do you object to or recommend? (Please be specific. If printed material, cite pages.)

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Address: _____
(Street and Number)

_____
(City, State, and Zip Code)

Date: _____

Telephone: _____

Note to LRS user:

Your concern is appreciated. Your request will be referred to the Materials Review Committee, and you will receive a written response informing you of its decision as soon as possible. The material in question will remain on the shelves during the review process.

Return this completed form to:

Associate Vice President of Learning Resource Services
Austin Community College
1212 Rio Grande, Austin, TX 78701

APPEAL

1. Title:

2. Author/Producer:

I am not satisfied with the decision of the Materials Review Committee for the following reasons:

I request an appeal be made to the Associate Vice President of Learning Resource Services.

Name:_____

Signature:_____

Address:_____
(Street and Number)

_____
(City, State, and Zip Code)

Date: _____

Telephone: _____

Note to LRS user:

Your concern is appreciated. Your request will be referred to the Associate Vice President, and you will receive a written response informing you of the decision as soon as possible. The material in question will remain on the shelves during the review process.

Return this completed form to:

Associate Vice President of Learning Resource Services
Austin Community College
1212 Rio Grande, Austin, TX 78701